

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7467
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD, AEAGC-COC & AEAGB-PDN (I&2)

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, PGOV, WB, GE
SUBJECT: CUSTOMS CONTROLS ON NARCOTICS SMUGGLED INTO THE WESTERN
SECTORS OF BERLIN

REF: STATE 189049 DTG 262144Z JUL 78

BEGIN SUMMARY: REFTEL POSED QUESTIONS CONCERNING CUSTOMS
PROCEDURES AT VARIOUS ENTRY POINTS INTO THE WESTERN SECTORS.
THE PRIMARY MEANS OF ENTRY FOR NARCOTICS CAN BE GROUPED AS
FOLLOWS: A) AIR (TEGEL) B) SURFACE DIRECTLY FROM THE GDR
(WALTERTSDORFER CHAUSSEE FROM SCHOENEFELD AIRPORT DREILINDEN
ND HEERSTRASSE CROSSING POINTS, AS WELL AS TRAINS); C)
SECTOR-SECTOR (SEVEN SURFACE CROSSING POINTS, TO U-BAHN LINES,
AND ONE S-BAHN LINE) AND
D) POST. (BARGES WOULD SEEM TO OFFER AN ADDITIONAL MEANS,
ALTHOUGH EVIDENCE IS LACKING THAT THIS METHOD IS NOW BEING
EMPLOYED.) ENTRY OF PERSONS AND GOODS UNDER A) AND B) ARE
GENERALLY SUBJECT TO NORMAL INTERNATIONAL- TYPE CUSTOMS
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CONTROLS, COMPARABLE TO CUSTOMS PROCEDURES AT BUSY AIRPORTS
AND ROAD ENTRY POINTS ELSEWHERE IN THE WEST. CATEGORY C) ENTRIES
ARE FOR THE MOST PART SUBJECTED TO NO STOPPING
CONTROLS AND ONLY TO OCCASIONAL SPOT CHECKS, AND MAIL
(CATEGORY D) IS OPENED ONLY IF SPECIFIC GROUNDS EXIST TO
SUSPECT A VIOLATION. EACH CATEGORY IS DISCUSSED BELOW.

END SUMMARY.

1. TEGEL AIRPORT. GERMAN CUSTOMS OFFICIALS DO EXERCISE AUTHORITY OVER PERSONS ARRIVING DIRECTLY FROM "ABROAD", AND CONDUCT BAGGAGE INSPECTION ON A SELECTIVE BASIS. FLIGHTS FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC ARE CONSIDERED DOMESTIC, HOWEVER, AND APART FROM A POSSIBLE POLICE DOCUMENT CHECK (AN ANTI-TERRORIST MEASURE) THERE IS NO STANDING CONTROL. PERSONS TRAVELLING TO BERLIN FROM TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST VIA THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND A CONNECTING DOMESTIC FLIGHT MAY BE INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM OTHER PASSENGERS WHO BEGAN THEIR TRAVEL IN THE FRG. SWITCHING TO INDICATE A TRAVELER HAS GONE THROUGH CUSTOMS IN THE FRG, WHEN, IN FACT, OF BAGGAGE TAGS IS ALSO A MEANS SOMETIMES USED TO EVADE CUSTOMS CONTROL, WE UNDERSTAND.

2. SURFACE FROM THE GDR.

A) WALTERSDORFER CHAUSSEE. THIS ENTRY POINT IS USED PRIMARILY BY BUSES FROM SCHOENEFELD AIRPORT, WHICH LIES SOUTH OF EAST BERLIN JUST INSIDE THE GDR. THE WEST GERMANS HAVE A CUSTOMS ENTRY POINT AT THE WALTERSDORFER CROSSING WHICH WE BELIEVE IS A CONSIDERABLE DETERRENT TO SMUGGLERS. IN PRACTICE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE OF COURSE FOR THE CUSTOMS OFFICIALS TO CHECK THOROUGHLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALL PERSONS AND LUGGAGE ON A CONTINUING BASIS AND, SINCE ARRIVALS ARE CONCENTRATED IN LARGE GROUPS, EVEN SPOT CHECKING CAN CREATE DELAYS. IN GENERAL, CUSTOMS COVERAGE HERE MAY BE COMPARABLE TO THAT AT BUSY US PORTS OF ENTRY.

B) DREILINDEN AND HEERSTRASSE. THESE TWO CROSSING POINTS HANDLE THE BULK OF ROAD TRAFFIC TRANSITING THE GDR TO BERLIN'S WESTERN SECTORS FROM THE FRG AS WELL AS TRAVELLERS DRIVING TO BERLIN (WEST) FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA, POLAND OR SCANDINAVIA. WEST GERMAN CUSTOMS OFFICIALS ARE PRESENT AT BOTH POINTS. MORE THAN OCCASIONAL INSPECTIONS WOULD ENTAIL DELAYS AND ALSO AROUSE POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES, GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE WEST (ESPECIALLY BERLINERS) TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT TRANSIT TRAFFIC SHOULD BE AS UNIMPEDED AS POSSIBLE. AS IN THE CASE OF AIR TRAVELLERS, MANY PERSONS RETURNING TO BERLIN FROM TURKEY PASS THROUGH THE FRG FIRST. MANY IF NOT MOST DRIVE VEHICLES WITH BERLIN OR WEST GERMAN TAGS. WITHOUT A THOROUGH EXAMINATION OF PASSPORT ENTRY STAMPS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR WESTERN CUSTOMS OFFICIALS TO DETERMINE WHO MIGHT HAVE BEGUN HIS JOURNEY TO BERLIN FROM TURKEY. TRUCKS, WHICH NOW SUPPLY BERLIN WITH OVER HALF OF ITS IMPORTED GOODS AND MATERIALS, PROVIDE WEST BERLIN CUSTOMS

INSPECTORS WITH THE SAME KINDS OF PROBLEMS FACED BY
CUSTOMS SERVICES AT ANY INTERNATIONAL BORDER. HEROIN IN
SEALED CONTAINERS CANNOT BE DETECTED BY DOGS. TO TEAR
APART A TRAILER-TRUCK FOR A THOUGH INSPECTION TAKES 4-5
HOURS, AND RESULTS IN AT LEAST SOME DAMAGE TO CARGO.

3. SECTOR-SECTOR. SMUGGLING ACROSS THE LINE SEPARATING
THE WESTERN PARTS FROM THE EASTERN PART OF THE CITY GIVES
THE BERLIN DRUG PROBLEM A SPECIAL TWIST. IT REMAINS A
CARDINAL WESTERN POSITION THAT GREATER BERLIN IS STILL
UNDER FOUR-POWER OCCUPATION STATUS AND THAT ACCESS BETWEEN
THE FOUR SECTORS SHOULD BE UNIMPEDED. THIS IS IN SHARP
CONTRAST TO THE SOVIET VIEW THAT ONLY THE WESTERN SECTORS
ARE STILL UNDER OCCUPATION STATUS, AND THAT THE LINE
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(WALL DIVIDING THE FROM EAST BERLIN- THE CAPITAL OF
THE GDR- IS AN INTERNATIONAL FRONTIER.

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN 1901 VICE 1900 AND SECTION 2 OF 4
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THUS, NOTWITH-

STANDING EASTERN CONTROLS ON ITS SIDE OF THE SECTOR-SECTOR LINE, THE THREE WESTERN ALLIES IN ORDER TO SUPPORT THEIR LEGAL POSITION AND PRESERVE THEIR OCCUPATION RIGHTS HAVE AVOIDED ESTABLISHING ANY SEMBLANCE OF INTERNATIONAL-TYPE BORDER CONTROLS ON THE WESTERN SIDE. IN GENERAL, PERSONS PERMITTED PAST EASTERN CONTROLS ENTER THE WESTERN SECTORS WITHOUT ANY CHECKS.

A. PASSENGER CARS AND PEDESTRIANS. MOST FOREIGNERS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE ALLIED FORCES ARE RESTRICTED TO CHECKPOINT CHARLIE. ALLIED MILITARY POLICE DO CONTROL ALLIED PERSONNEL, BUT ONLY AS AN INTERNAL, ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION. THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE A SEARCH FOR NARCOTICS. WITH RESPECT TO OTHER, NON-ALLIED TRAVELLERS, WEST BERLIN CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES MAINTAIN A DISCREET PRESENCE AT CHECKPOINT CHARLIE. THEY DO NOT NORMALLY "PROCESS" OR INTERFERE WITH PERSONS ARRIVING THROUGH THIS CHECKPOINT, HOWEVER. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(EVEN SO, THE FRENCH DEPUTY POLITICAL ADVISER HAS QUESTIONED IN A LOW KEY MANNER WITH HIS BRITISH AND US COUNTERPARTS THE DESIRABILITY OF PERMITTING ANY PRESENCE IN SUCH CLOSE PROXIMITY TO CHECKPOINT CHARLIE OF WEST BERLIN CUSTOMS PERSONNEL.) BERLINERS, WEST GERMANS AND CERTAIN DIPLOMATS IN ADDITION EACH HAVE THE USE OF SOME OF THE SIX OTHER SECTOR-SECTOR AUTO OF FOOT CROSSING POINTS. CONTROLS ON THE WESTERN SIDE AGAIN ARE MINIMAL. THERE IS NO PERMANENT ALLIED PRESENCE AT ANY OF THESE POINTS.

B. U-BAHN AND S-BAHN PASSENGERS COMING WEST PASS THROUGH GDR CONTROLS AT THE CENTRAL FRIEDRICHSTRASSE BAHNHOF IN EAST BERLIN. FOR THE SAME POLITICAL REASONS WHICH RULE OUT ESTABLISHING STANDING CONTROLS OVER OTHER FORMS (MOTOR VEHICLE AND FOOT) OF TRAFFIC BETWEEN THE EASTERN AND WESTERN SECTORS, ARRIVING U-BAHN AND S-BAHN PASSENGERS ARE NOT SUBJECTED TO REGULAR CUSTOMS CHECKS BY THE WEST. OCCASIONAL SPOT CHECKS OF PERSONS LEAVING U-BAHN AND S-BAHN STATIONS IN THE WESTERN SECTORS ARE MADE. THIS IS OF LIMITED UTILITY IN CATCHING DRUG COURIERS GIVEN THE GREAT NUMBER OF POSSIBLE EXIT POINTS. A RECENT ALLIED DECISION TO PERMIT WEST BERLIN POLICE AUTHORITIES TO CARRY OUT INCREASED BUT STILL OCCASIONAL CONTROLS ON THE S-BAHN HAS DRAWN A SHARP SOVIET PROTEST AND HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED.

4. POST. BERLIN CUSTOMS AND POLICE OFFICIALS ARE WORRIED OVER WHAT THEY FEAR IS INCREASING USE OF THE MAILS FOR HEROIN SMUGGLING IN SMALL INDIVIDUAL AMOUNTS. MAIL IS NOT OPENED UNLESS SPECIFIC GROUNDS EXIST TO SUSPECT A PARTICULAR PIECE.

5. THE FRENCH AND BRITISH SHARE SOME OF OUR CONCERN
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OVER THE BERLIN DRUG PROBLEM AND WANT TO BE EHELPFUL, SO LONG AS NO DAMAGE IS DON TO IMPORTANT WESTERN POLITICAL INTERESTS, ESPECIALLY TO THE POSITION THAT THE SECTOR-SECTOR LINE IS NOT AN INTERNATIONAL BORDER. IT NEEDS TO BE KEPT IN MIND THAT THE FRENCH AND BRITISH APPARENTLY HAVE NOT DETECTED ANY SIGNIFICANT DRUG PROBLEM AMONG THEIR OWN FORCES HERE.

6. THE FRENCH AND BRITISH ON A PRACTICAL LEVEL DID JOIN WITHUS IN APPROVING THE REQUEST FROM THE BERLIN SENATOR FOR THE INTERIOR FOR INCREASED AUTHORITY TO CONTROL PERSONS USING THE EASTERN-RUN TRAINS IN THE WESTERN SECTORS. THIS WAS EXPLICITLY INTENDED TO HELP THE POLICE GET AT DRUG SMUGGLERS. BECAUSE OF THE POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES THE ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY GRANTED IS IN FACT, VERY LIMITED. CONTROLS ARE TO BE OCCASIONAL, AND UNLESS WESTERN ALLIED PERMISSION IS OBTAINED BEFOREHAND, ARE NOT TO BE CARRIED OUT ON A LARGE SCALE OR CLOSE TO THE SECTOR-SECTOR LINE.

7. THE SHARP SOVIET REACTION TO EVEN THISMODEST CHANGE BRINGS OUT ANOTHER COMPLEXITY. (USBERLIN 1708.) WHLE THE WESTERN ALLIES MAINTAIN THAT THE PROPERTY USED BY THE REICHSBAHN AND S-BAHN IN EACH OF THE WESTERN SECTORS IS UNDER CONTROL OF THE RESPECTIVE SECTOR COMMANDANY, THE SOVIETS CLAIM THAT SUCH PROPERTY BELONGS TO THE GDR. IT IS POLITICALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE WESTERN ALLIES FOR EASTERN POLICE TO CARRY OUT SIGNIFICANT LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNCTIONS ON TRAINS WHILE IN THE WESTERN SECTORS.

8. COMMENT. INFORMATION GAINED FROM RECENT ARRESTS AND DEA INTELLIGENCE GATHERING OPERATIONS CONFIRM THAT HEROIN IS REACHING BERLIN VIA A GREAT VARIETY OF MEANS. THERE IS NO ONE MAJOR ENTRY POINT AT WHICH CONTROLS, IF INCREASED, WOULD EFFECTLY DIMINISH THE FLOW OF DRUGS FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME. MOTOR VEHICLES MAY WELL BE THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PREFERRED MEANS. THE RELATIVELY SHORT DISTANCES INVOLVED (WHEN COMPARED WIT BRINGING HEROIN FROM S.E. ASIA) AND THE LOW PRICES IN TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST MAKE IT ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE AND ATTRACTIVE TO SMUGGLE RELATIVELY SMALL

INDIVIDUAL AMOUNTS.

9. THE PICTURE IS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE GREAT VARIETY OF ROUTES. MUCH OF THE HEROIN REACHING BERLIN FROM TURKEY OR THE MIDDLE EAST SEEMS TO BE PASSING THOUGH THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC EN ROUTE. AS NOTED ABOVE, MOST COURIERS ARE NOT ONLY INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE VAST NUMBER OF LEGITIMATE TRAVELLERS BUT BY THE TIME THEY REACH BERLIN ARE MIXED IN WITH "DOMESTIC" TRAVELLERS.

10. THE PRACTICAL AND POLITICAL OBSTACLES TO SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED CONTROLS ARE LARGE CUSTOMS INSPECTIONS OF PASSENGERS, LUGGAGE AND VEHICLES AT INTERNATIONAL ENTRY

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POINTS ARE PROBABLY ALREADY OF A PAR WITH PROCEDURES IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AND ELSEWHERE. INCREASED CONTROLS COULD ENTAIL DELAYS OF TRAVELLERS AND BE SEEN AT SOME POINT AS AFFECTING THE FREE FLOW OF PASSENGERS AND TRAFFIC IN AND OUT OF THIS ISLAND CITY. A KEY QUESTION IS WHAT MORE CAN BE DONE TO ENHANCE CUSTOMS CONTROLS AT BERLIN'S PORTS OF INTERNATIONAL ENTRY THAT WILL NOT BLOCK TRAFFIC AND WILL BE SEEN AS CONSISTENT WITH NORMAL PRACTICES ELSEWHERE. THE COMMANDANT RAISED THIS MATTER WITH BERLIN CUSTOMS AND POLICE REPRESENTATIVES IN JULY FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION AT A FOLLOW-UP MEETING IN SEPTEMBER.

11. WHILE THERE ARE POLITICAL ASPECTS TO ATTEMPTING INCREASED CONTROLS AT BERLIN'S INTERNATIONAL ENTRY POINTS, THE SECTOR-SECTOR CROSSING POINTS PRESENT A PARTICULAR DIFFICULTY. WE HAVE ALSO ENCOURAGED THE CUSTOMS AND POLICE AUTHORITIES TO COME UP WITH IDEAS FOR IMPROVED METHODS OF SPOTTING AND APPREHENDING DRUG SMUGGLERS WHO ENTER USING THESE MEANS, PARTICULARLY THE S-AND U-BAHNS. WE SEE SOME HOPE EVENTUALLY FOR INCREASED SPOT CONTROLS ON THE TRAINS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOTWITHSTANDING STRONG SOVIET OBJECTIONS TO THIS LATEST EFFORT. NEVERTHELESS, THE OUTLOOK UNFAVORABLE FOR ESTABLISHING CUSTOMS CONTROLS ON A PAR WITH THOSE AT DREILINDEN, HEER-STRASSE, OR WALTERSDORFER CHAUSSEE. TO DO SO WOULD REQUIRE STOPPING THE TRAINS AT THE FIRST STATION ON EACH OF THE THREE LINES ENTERING THE WESTEN SECTORS FOR PASSENGER SCREENING AND PROCESSING.

12. ANY MEASURES APPROACHING THIS LEVEL WOULD , WE FEEL, BE UNACCEPTABLE TO OUR BRITISH AND FRENCH ALLIES, AS WELL AS TO THE SOVIETS. OUR ALLIES WOULD SEE IT AS UNDERMINING OUR LEGAL POSITION REGARDING THE STATUS OF GREATER BERLIN. THE SOVIETS WOULD CERTAINLY REGARD IT AS A MAJOR INTER-FERENCE IN THE OPERATION OF THE S-BAHN. WE ARE, OF COURSE, NOT ABLE UNILATERALLY TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES AFFECTING THE BRITISH AND FRENCH SECTORS. WHETHER TO IMPLEMENT MAJOR CHANGES DIRECTLY AFFECTING WHAT THE EAST REGARDS AS BEING WITHIN ITS JURISDICTION (THE S-BAHN) WOULD REQUIRE A CAREFULLY WEIGHTED DECISION BY ALL THREE WESTERN OCCUPATION POWERS, AS WELL AS BONN.

13. AM MAJOR IMPONDERABLE IN THE BERLIN SMUGGLING PROBLEM IS THE GDR. THERE SEEM TO BE SOME SIGNS THAT THE GDR MAY BE GRADUALLY SEEKING TO PROJECT A MORE RESPONSIBLE IMAGE AS A COUNTRY INTERESTED IN COOPERATING INTERNATIONALLY AGAINST NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS. WE ALSO HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT CUSTOMS CONTROLS MAY HAVE TIGHTENED SOMEWHAT AT SCHOENEFELD AIRPORT.

14. WHILE HEROIN REACHES WEST BERLIN VIA MANY ROUTES, THE GDR HOLDS THE ONLY PRACTICAL KEY TO CONTROLLING TWO OF THEM: SCHOENEFELD AIRPORT AND THE CITY TRAINS WHICH PASS TO THE WESTERN SECTORS FROM THE FRIEDRICHSTRASSE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STATIONS IN EAST BERLIN. WE HAVE GIVEN SOME IN-HOUSE

CONSIDERATION TO A POSSIBLE MEASURE WHICH IF TAKEN BY THE GDR WOULD CONSIDERABLY EASE THE SCHOENEFELD PROBLEM, AND WITH NO GREAT TROUBLE OR DISADVANTAGE FOR THE EAST: THIS WOULD BE TO REQUIRE ALL ARRIVING PASSENGERS AT SCHOENEFELD IN TRANSIT TO WEST BERLIN TO TRAVEL VIA EASTERN AIRPORT BUS THROUGH THE WALTERSDORFER CHAUSSEE CROSSING POINT. THE GDR WOULD STILL COLLECT ITS FEES BUT THE PASSENGERS WOULD BE FUNNELED THROUGH ONE CUSTOMS POINT WHERE THE WEST CAN CONDUCT EFFECTIVE CHECKS. AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, TRANSIT PASSENGERS FROM SCHOENEFELD TRAVELLING TO WEST BERLIN VIA EAST BERLIN AND THE S-BAHN DO NOT PARTICULARLY BENEFIT THE GDR BY THEIR TRIP. WOULD WELCOM EMBASSY BERLIN'S COMMENT.

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15. THE GDR EXERCISES PASSPORT AND OTHER TRAVEL CONTROLS ON PERSONS LEAVING EAST BERLIN AT THE FRIEDRICHSTRASSE STATIONS BY S-OR U-BAHN FOR THE WESTERN SECTORS. IT IS NOT OUR PLACE, EVEN IF WE HAD ALLIED AGREEMENT TO DO SO, TO SUGGEST TO THE GDR THAT CONTROLS BE INCREASED ON TRAVELLERS TO THE OTHER SECTORS OF BERLIN. (SCHOENEFELD AIRPORT LIES OUTSIDE GREATER BERLIN AND TRAVEL FROM IT TO WALTERSDORFER CHAUSSEE DOES NOT RAISE INTRA-BERLIN QUESTIONS.) NEVERTHELESS, ONE OF THE MAIN CHOKE POINTS THROUGH WHICH DRUGS ARE ASSUMED TO REACH WEST BERLIN LIES IN THE EASTERN SECTOR AND, WE ASSUME, READILY CONTROLLABLE FOR NARCOTICS SMUGGLING SHOULD THE EASTERN AUTHORITIES BE SO INCLINED.

16. BONN 14506 HAS JUST BEEN RECEIVED AND WILL BE ADDRESSED SEPTEL.
17. USCOB CONCURS.NELSON

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